

CONSERVATION UPDATE

2011

Senator Dave Hildenbrand • Toll-Free: (866) 305-2129 • Website: www.SenatorDaveHildenbrand.com

State Senator Dave Hildenbrand



Dear Neighbor:

If you love the outdoors and live in Michigan, there's no place like home! Whether you camp, boat, fish, hike, watch wildlife or hunt, our state's natural beauty and abundant resources provide a lifetime of fantastic recreation opportunities.

It's important to conserve our natural resources so the rich outdoor traditions we enjoy today can be enjoyed by future generations as well. This report provides a brief update on policy and legislative issues that affect our natural heritage.

Sincerely,

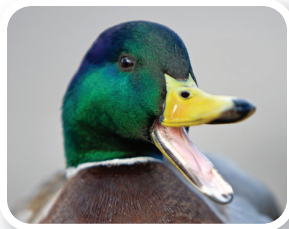
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Wildlife watching – binoculars optional

From bald eagles to porcupines and more, we share the state with an amazing array of wildlife. In fact, Michigan is home to more than 750 kinds of fish, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds.

You can find some of the best places to see wildlife in the on-line [Michigan Wildlife Viewing Guide](#). This easy-to-use publication features 121 areas across the state and lists the wildlife you would find as well as a directory of the facilities and any recreational opportunities, such as camping, fishing or hunting.



Senate action on invasive species

The Michigan Senate has long championed efforts to guard against aquatic invasive species - the biggest threat to the health, perhaps the very future, of our Great Lakes.

More than 180 non-native pests have invaded our waters. Invasives disrupt native fish and habitat, harm water quality and recreation, and cost millions to control.

The Senate's Great Lakes Conservation Task Force laid out a road map in 2002. In subsequent years, the Senate:

- Passed the region's first ballast water discharge laws – laws that have served as a blueprint for other states.
- Passed an aggressive set of invasive species possession laws.
- Pressed for immediate federal action to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes.

The stakes are too high to rest and the Senate is currently exploring other ways to help keep invasive species out of our waters. Stay tuned!



Oil revenue funds outdoor recreation

Annual revenues from the development of state-owned mineral resources (mainly oil and gas) provide funding for special projects that protect natural areas and provide public outdoor recreation.

This year, a record \$102 million in restricted revenue will fund 117 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund access and development projects. I am pleased to let you know the following project will help preserve the quality of life in the 29th District:

Seeley Creek Park expansion, Kent County (grant-in-aid to Grattan Township)

A full list of the MNRTF projects is available [HERE](#).



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Experience Pure Michigan – on \$10 a year

Under legislation signed into law last year, Michigan families can enjoy more of Pure Michigan... for less.

The State Recreation Passport, a license plate sticker with a P for parks, is good at 98 state parks and recreation areas, and 1,000 boat launches. Michigan residents can buy the annual park pass for \$10 when they pay their annual vehicle registration fee, or at a state park.

The \$10 vehicle fee (\$5 for motorcycles) replaces the old \$24 annual window sticker. Out-of-state visitors must still buy a \$29 non-resident sticker or an \$8 day pass.

I'm pleased to report there's been a steady increase in the number of motorists buying the passport, and that will help assure there's a stable source of long-term funding for state recreation opportunities. Find out more at www.michigan.gov/recreationpassport.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Arbor Day - April 29

Safe Boating Week - May 21-27

Great Outdoors Month - June

National Trails Day - June 4

Free Fishing Weekend - June 11-12

National Fishing and Boating Week - June 4-12



Michigan Recycles! Coloring and Activity Book

Click on the book to learn about recycling with your young child.

Michigan Toll-Free Numbers:

Emerald Ash Borer	866-325-0023
Environmental Assistance Center	800-662-9278
Pollution Emergency Alert	800-292-4706
Radon Information	800-723-6642
Report All Poaching (RAP)	800-292-7800

Hildenbrand applauds White Pine Award winners

Nearly 20 years ago, Senate Republicans developed the White Pine Award for Environmental Excellence. The program recognizes individuals or groups that have made a commitment to conserve Michigan's natural resources.

A group of middle school students from West Michigan are the first recipients this year. The students built a rain garden to address water run-off, and raised awareness in their community about water pollution.

Previous winners have been honored for a range of environmental activities, from youth conservation leadership to urban forest "tree-cycling."

The White Pine Award is a reminder that inspired individuals make the difference.